THE CLAIMS

The claims of the application, as currently amended, read as follows:

1 to 21. (Canceled)

22. (Previously Presented) A method of avoiding unacceptably high temperatures of a wall adjacent to a cooking appliance comprising:

a glass-ceramic plate (12, 112) having an upper surface for receiving a cooking vessel (42 136A, 136B) and a lower surface; a radiant electric heater (10, 110) arranged at the lower surface of the glass-ceramic cooking plate (12, 112); and electronic control apparatus including:

a temperature sensor (24, 140) for monitoring temperature at or adjacent to the cooking plate, which sensor provides an electrical output as a function of temperature; and control means (30, 142) connected to the temperature sensor and to the heater, for controlling energising of the heater from a power supply, the control means being adapted and arranged to energise the heater at a plurality of user selectable power levels including a full power level, wherein the control means (30, 142) is adapted such that, when the heater (10, 110) is energised at the full power level in order to avoid unacceptably high temperatures of a wall adjacent to the cooking appliance, the heater is energised to heat the cooking plate (12, 112) to a first temperature level for a predetermined initial period of 20 to 50 minutes and is thereafter energised to heat the cooking plate to a second temperature level, lower than the first temperature level.

23. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 22, wherein during an initial minor proportion of the predetermined initial period the heater (10, 110) is energised at a boost temperature level, in excess of the first temperature level.

24. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 22, wherein the second temperature level is between about 75 percent and about 85 percent of the first temperature level.

25. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 24, wherein the second temperature is about 83 percent of the first temperature level.

26. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 22, wherein the length of the predetermined initial period is dependent on the time elapsed since the control means (30, 142) was last at the full power level.

27. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 26, wherein the length of the predetermined ~~redetermined~~ initial period is inversely proportional to the time elapsed since the control means (30, 142) was last at the full power level.

28. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 22, wherein reduction from the first temperature level to the second temperature level is effected in a continuous manner.

29. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 22, wherein reduction from the first temperature level to the second temperature level is effected in a stepwise manner.

30. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 29, wherein reduction from the first temperature level to the second temperature level is effected in a single step.

31. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 29, wherein reduction from the first temperature level to the second temperature level is effected in a plurality of steps.

32. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 22, wherein the control means (30, 142) comprises a microprocessor-based controller (32, 144) into which the predetermined initial period and a setting for the second temperature level are programmed for automatic implementation.

33. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 22, wherein the temperature sensor (24, 140) provides an electrical output as a function of temperature of the upper surface of the glass-ceramic cooking plate (12, 112).

34. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 22, wherein the temperature sensor (24, 140) comprises a device whose electrical resistance changes as a function of temperature.

35. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 34, wherein the temperature sensor (24, 140) comprises a platinum resistance temperature detector.

36. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 22, wherein the temperature sensor (24, 140) is provided on the lower surface of the glass-ceramic cooking plate (12, 112).

37. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 22, wherein the heater (110) has a main heating zone (118) at least partly surrounded by at least one additional heating zone (120), the main heating zone being energisable in a first mode alone and in a second mode together with the at least one additional heating zone.

38. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 37, wherein the at least one additional heating zone (120) is arranged substantially concentrically with the main heating zone (118).

39. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 38, wherein the at least one additional heating zone (120) is arranged against at least one side of the main heating zone (118).

40. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 39, wherein at least one additional heating zone (120) is arranged at opposite sides of the main heating zone (118).

41. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 37, wherein the predetermined initial time is about 20 minutes to about 40 minutes when the main heating zone (118) is energised together with the at least one additional heating zone (120), and is about 30 minutes to about 50 minutes when the main heating zone (118) is energised alone.

42. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 22, wherein the predetermined initial time is about 20 minutes to about 40 minutes.

43. (Canceled)

44. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 22, wherein the temperature sensor is spaced behind the lower surface of the glass-ceramic cooking plate.